

REMARKS

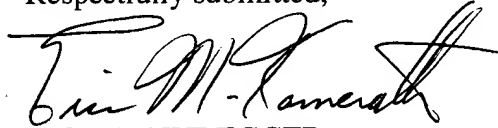
Claims 1-29 are pending. The Office Action rejected all claims as either anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) by U.S. Patent No. 6,202,207 to Donohue ("*Donohue*") or as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over *Donohue* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,614,804 to McFadden et al. ("*McFadden*").

Applicants note for the record that this Application claims priority to, among others, U.S. Patent No. 5,940,074 to Britt, Jr. et al. ("*Britt*"), which was filed on November 22, 1996. See Specification, p. 2, ll. 3-11; Filing Receipt; *Britt*. Support for the subject matter claimed in this Application may be found throughout *Britt*, particularly beginning at line 20 of column 7 and continuing through line 11 of column 10. *Donohue's* foreign priority claims¹, however, give possible effective dates only as early as January 28, 1998 and/or April 24, 1998, neither of which predates Applicants' priority date which is at least as early as November 22, 1996. Similarly, *McFadden* was filed March 22, 1999, which also fails to predate Applicants' priority date of at least as early as November 22, 1996.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all rejections of record are improper and should be withdrawn. In the event that the Examiner finds any remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 12th day of March, 2004.

Respectfully submitted,



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¹Applicants have not examined *Donohue's* foreign priority claim at this time to determine whether *Donohue* is in fact entitled to an earlier effective filing date since neither *Donohue's* U.S. filing date nor foreign filing date predate Applicants priority date.